



The Basics - Core considerations

Digital skills and understanding

Questions relevant to digital skills and understanding to discuss with crisis-affected people

Digital skills and understanding shape how people engage with technology, the benefits they can gain from it, and the risks they may face.

This set of questions supports conversations that explore people's prior experiences with technology, the barriers they encounter in accessing or using digital tools, and how these challenges may differ across the community. It also creates space to discuss perceived risks, ethical concerns, and worries about sharing personal information.

By grounding these discussions in people's own perspectives, the questions help teams better understand what support, safeguards, and adaptations are needed to ensure technology use is safe, inclusive, and meaningful.

1. Facilitator guidance

These questions are intended to help facilitators understand how people experience and perceive technology, rather than to assess their abilities or label levels of digital literacy. Approach these conversations with respect and curiosity, recognising that access to technology and digital skills are shaped by social, economic, and cultural factors, including gender, age, disability, and power dynamics.

Encourage participants to share their experiences in their own words, and avoid assumptions about familiarity or comfort with digital tools. Be attentive to differences within the community, particularly where some individuals or groups may face greater barriers to access or higher risks when using technology. Use the conversation to surface concerns about data sharing, privacy, and emerging technologies, and acknowledge that hesitation or reluctance can be a rational response to perceived risks.

Clearly explain how this information will be used to improve the design and implementation of digital tools, and avoid framing gaps in access or skills as problems to be "fixed" without context. The goal is to inform safer, more inclusive approaches that respect people's agency and lived realities.



2. Practical checklist for facilitators

Before the conversation

- I understand that the goal is to understand experiences, not evaluate abilities.
 - I have considered possible inequalities of access within the community.
 - I am prepared to listen to concerns without correcting or justifying solutions.
 - I can explain in simple terms why we are having this conversation.
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During the conversation

- I ask about previous experiences with technology without assuming familiarity.
 - I explore barriers to access and use, paying attention to differences in gender, age, and social role.
 - I actively listen to concerns about risks, ethics, and privacy.
 - I recognize that not wanting to use technology can be a valid decision.
 - I avoid technical language and adapt the pace and format of the conversation.
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After the conversation

- I record learnings in a respectful and non-identifiable manner.
- I use what I hear to adjust designs, supports, and safeguards.
- I check whether alternative formats, contextual training, or greater data protection are required.
- I share reflections on identified risks and needs with the team.



3. The questions for digital skills and understanding

- *What (if any) technology have you used before?
- *Are there barriers to accessing technology? Which ones and for whom?
- *Are there members of the community who have less access to technology than others? (Probe for gendered and other social access constraints)
- *What (if any) risks do you see related to this and other possible technology solutions?
- *What (if any) ethical concerns do you have regarding emerging technologies?
- *What (if any) risks do you see in sharing your information that identifies you personally?